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Subject: Daily News Digest - Thursday, April 25, 2013
Attachments: R6 Daily News Digest 04-25-13.pdf

(See attached file: R6 Daily News Digest 04-25-13.pdf)

1 - Texas Fertilizer Plant Fell Through Regulatory Cracks

The New York Times, 04/24/2013

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/25/us/texas-fertilizer-plant-fell-through-cracks-of-regulatory-oversight.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>

In the moments after a fire broke out at a fertilizer plant here last week, some of the volunteer firefighters and other first responders who rushed to the scene appeared to have known that there were tons of dangerously combustible ammonium nitrate inside, but others did not.

2 - Congress to Look at Chemical Facility Regulations in Light of Texas Explosion

BNA Daily Environment Report, 04/25/2013

http://esweb.bna.com/eslw/1245/split_display.adp?fedfid=30411052&vname=denotallissues&jd=a0d7v1g9j8&split=0

Members of both chambers of Congress told BNA they will look at how U.S. chemical facilities are regulated in the aftermath of the April 17 explosion of a Texas fertilizer retail facility, but they largely refrained from judging the effectiveness of existing regulatory programs before an investigation can be completed.

3 - Chemical hazards often go unreported in rural areas

The Houston Chronicle, 04/24/2013

<http://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/Chemical-hazards-often-go-unreported-in-rural-4458103.php?t=d8d90979b67c6fe178&t=d8d90979b6>

Hundreds - if not thousands - of family-owned plants, farmers' cooperatives and corporate fertilizer businesses in rural America overlook or disregard laws meant to protect the public from potentially explosive chemicals. And the federal government has known about extensive under-reporting of those hazards for years, according to Department of Homeland Security statistics and interviews with safety and industry experts.

4 - Limiting Environmental Regs Raises Fears of 'Race to the Bottom'

State Impact Texas, 04/25/2013

<http://stateimpact.npr.org/texas/2013/04/25/limiting-environmental-regs-raises-fears-of-race-to-the-bottom/#more-26947>

Texas likes to be "business friendly" and as the state legislature considers bills to limit environmental regulation to keep it that way, some economists warn of the longer term consequences.

5 - Arkansas Oil Spill Damage Assessment: If Not the Feds, Then Who?

Inside Climate News, 04/25/2013

<http://insideclimatenews.org/news/20130425/arkansas-oil-spill-damage-assessment-if-not-feds-then-who>

Federal agencies have so far not decided whether to undertake an assessment of the ecological harm caused by ExxonMobil's pipeline break, which spewed a tarry oil slick into yards, streets and creeks in a central Arkansas town.

6 - What is the likelihood that the Supreme Court will take review of EPA's greenhouse gas regulations?

Fuel Fix, 04/25/2013

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2013/04/24/what-is-the-likelihood-that-the-supreme-court-will-take-review-of-epas-greenhouse-gas-regulations/>

On Friday, Texas lead a group of states in asking the Supreme Court to hear (and overrule) the DC Circuit case of last year upholding EPA's regulation of greenhouse gases from stationary sources. A group of industry representatives have joined in asking for Supreme Court review. Given the DC case and Texas's petition for certiorari, I think it unlikely that the Supreme Court will hear the case. Even if the High Court does hear the case, I think it unlikely to reverse the DC Circuit, at least in a way that would be to Texas's and regulated industry's liking.

7 - STIR fears letters will derail EPA efforts

Talequah Daily Press, 04/24/2013

<http://tahlequahdailypress.com/local/x1097433699/STIR-fears-letters-will-derail-EPA-efforts>

Members of Save The Illinois River Inc. are worried efforts are under way to derail the formation of a Total Maximum Daily Load of nutrients within the Illinois River watershed.

8 - Gas company settles NM air pollution complaint

Albuquerque Business First, 04/24/2013

<http://www.bizjournals.com/albuquerque/blog/morning-edition/2013/04/gas-company-settles-pollution-complaint.html>

A Houston-based natural gas company with operations in the Farmington area has reached an \$838,000 settlement with the New Mexico Environment Department for alleged air pollution emissions at 31 of its New Mexico facilities.

9 - Guidance Says EPA Is Developing Next Generation Compliance Program

BNA Daily Environment Report, 04/25/2013

http://esweb.bna.com/eslw/1245/split_display.adp?fedfid=30411047&vname=dennotallissues&jd=a0d7v1d4f8&split=0

The Environmental Protection Agency is developing "a new paradigm" in its compliance program to address high noncompliance with environmental regulations, the agency said in draft national program manager guidance for fiscal year 2014. The EPA Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance said it is developing a Next Generation Compliance program that will take advantage of advances in emissions monitoring and information technology.

10 - EPA Acting Administrator Defends Water Infrastructure Cuts, Aerial Surveillance

BNA Daily Environment Report, 04/25/2013

http://esweb.bna.com/eslw/1245/split_display.adp?fedfid=30411039&vname=dennotallissues&jd=a0d7v0z0n1&split=0

Bob Perciasepe, acting head of the Environmental Protection Agency, on April 24 defended proposed cuts to water infrastructure funds and the agency's use of aerial surveillance to enforce the Clean Water Act. Perciasepe told members of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies that a proposed \$472 million cut to the state clean water revolving fund and state drinking water revolving fund is one of the "painful choices" that the agency had to make in formulating its fiscal year 2014 budget request.

11 - EPA Fights Multiple Legal Attacks In Suit Over MACT For Existing Utilities

Inside EPA, 04/25/2013

<http://insideepa.com/201304242431999/EPA-Daily-News/Daily-News/epa-fights-multiple-legal-attacks-in-suit-over-mact-for-existing-utilities/menu-id-95.html>

EPA is fighting multiple legal attacks by the power sector, states and environmentalists in final briefing in litigation over the agency's utility maximum achievable control technology (MACT) air toxics rule for existing utilities, broadly rejecting competing claims that the rule is either weaker or stricter than the Clean Air Act requires.

12 - Two Agencies Plan to Study Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions From Gas Drilling

BNA Daily Environment Report, 04/25/2013

http://esweb.bna.com/eslw/1245/split_display.adp?fedfid=30411050&vname=dennotallissues&jd=a0d7v1g6u2&split=0

Two government agencies together will study air quality and greenhouse gas emissions at natural gas drilling operations. The National Energy Technology Laboratory of the Energy Department and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health signed a memorandum of understanding for the research, the agencies announced April 23.

13 - EPA Report Shows Utilities Going Above, Beyond Secondary Treatment Standards

BNA Daily Environment Report, 04/25/2013

http://esweb.bna.com/eslw/1245/split_display.adp?fedfid=30411042&vname=dennotallissues&jd=a0d7v1a2u5&split=0

An Environmental Protection Agency report shows that the nation's utilities that discharge at least 10 million gallons per day of wastewater are going above and beyond their prescribed secondary treatment standards.

14 - EPA Struggles To Use Children's Health Data When Setting NAAQS

Inside EPA, 04/25/2013

<http://insideepa.com/201304242432058/EPA-Daily-News/Daily-News/epa-struggles-to-use-childrens-health-data-when-setting-naaqs/menu-id-95.html>

An EPA scientist is downplaying prospects that the agency will be able to use more children's health studies when setting national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS), as its children's health advisors are urging, due to political opposition from industry groups and their supporters on Capitol Hill, as well as a limited number of studies of children.

15 - OU increases its green power and rises on top schools list

The Norman Transcript, 04/25/2013

<http://normantranscript.com/headlines/x63039997/OU-increases-its-green-power-and-rises-on-top-schools-list>

The University of Oklahoma has increased its ranking to No. 2 on the Top 20 College and University list of the largest green power purchasers, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

16 - BP teams with A&M to study where spills might travel in Gulf

The Houston Chronicle, 04/25/2013

<http://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/BP-teams-with-A-M-to-study-where-spills-might-4460635.php>

Texas A&M and BP have teamed up to release 5,000 "drift cards" in the Gulf Of Mexico to help track ocean tides, and in the event of an industrial accident, the direction of the spill.